

# GNDCon: Meeting of the growing community of Wikibase users

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statsbiblioteket\\_1%C3%A6sesalen-2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statsbiblioteket_1%C3%A6sesalen-2.jpg)

**GNDCon is a conference for stakeholders in the Gemeinsame Normdatei (GND) — the German language integrated authority file. The GND is used across the cultural and research sector when cataloguing. Wikibase – the software behind Wikidata – is used to facilitate cross-sector and collaborative data maintenance. The conference is organised by those involved in the GND Cooperative, with the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB) as the major organiser.**

The GND Meets Wikibase project is the first of its kind at a major national library. The DNB plans to use Wikibase, the software developed by Wikimedia Deutschland, to run the GND file. Wikimedia Deutschland works closely with the DNB on this project, and stakeholders in the GND are naturally an important part of the growing Wikibase community. This year's edition of the GNDCon was completely online and adopted a decentralized format, with a total of 14 “MiniCons” run by a range of organisers and delving into a number of topics.

In the MiniCon organized by Wikimedia Deutschland, we wanted to bring the existing community and curious newcomers together, talk about Wikibase and Wikidata, gain insight into institutions' requirements and challenges, and discuss the future.

**Connecting a community with a passion for Linked Open Data**

To find out more about the community, we conducted a survey beforehand. Participants had varying levels of knowledge and experience with Wikidata and Wikibase in the group, and many were interested in Linked Open Data. Often due to personal interest, rather than any institutional mandate. The interests also included a diverse range of topics including digitalisation, multilinguality, linking databases and expanding user services.

Next to giving attendees an overview of Wikidata and Wikibase, we held an interactive discussion designed to delve into the challenges institutions face when embarking on Wikibase projects, the different ways Wikibase could be used, and how this particular community group might want to move forward. Slides from the session can be found [here](#), and written notes taken during the discussion can be found [here](#).

There were four key learning outcomes:

1. This particular group could imagine using Wikibase for, among other things, bibliographical, person and norm data.
2. A number of different skills are needed to run a Wikibase project: technical, soft, and data modelling.
3. There is a strong interest for a German-speaking community group.
4. There is interest in further workshops and exchange in the future.

### **Helping institutions to connect with the world of open data with Wikibase**

Through this MiniCon, we gained further insight into this particular community group, as well as their needs and interests. We will take this valuable information and use it to help inform further development work and our efforts to support the growing Wikibase and Wikidata community.

More broadly, it is exciting to see how interest in Wikibase continues to grow both within Germany and internationally. This is also evidenced by the growing number of institutions that are signing the [WikiLibrary manifesto](#). Increasingly, Wikibase is being explored as a tool to help institutions connect with the world of linked open data, and in turn, increase access to their vast knowledge collections. This is very exciting, and we're looking forward to seeing the projects that are to come.